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Viewing cable 08OSLO670, LESSON LEARNED FROM NORWEGIAN DECISION TO BUY JSF

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags [#cablegate](#) and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. #08OSLO670.

Reference ID Created Released Classification Origin
[08OSLO670](#) 2008-12-16 13:24 2011-08-30 01:44 CONFIDENTIAL Embassy Oslo

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/article8218467.ab>

VZCZXYZ0000
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHNY #0670/01 3511324
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 161324Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7219
INFO RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 0226
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1073
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN 2490
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1523
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 3070
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0548
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 3351
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 4407
RMFISSS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEHLO/USDAO LONDON UK
RMFISS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUEHTC/USDAO THE HAGUE NL
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 1537
RUEHNY/ODC OSLO NO

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 000670

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/13/2018
TAGS: [MARK](#) [MASS](#) [MCAP](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NO](#)

SUBJECT: LESSON LEARNED FROM NORWEGIAN DECISION TO BUY JSF

REF: A. A: OSLO 629 B. B: OSLO 585 C. C: OSLO 522

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Kevin M. Johnson for reasons 1.4 b and d

[¶1.](#) (C) Summary. After an extensive, coordinated USG effort, the Norwegian Government decided to buy F-35s in the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) pr

The Tale

[¶2.](#) (C) The country team has been living and breathing JSF for over a year, following a road to success that was full of heart-stopping ups and downs. In 2007, the GON announced criteria for Future Combat Aircraft competition to include aircraft capability, life cycle costs and industrial participation. Over the spring and summer, Saab's promotion of its industrial package was intensive and covered every province of Norway. Norwegian Labor Party's sudden onslaught of negative press during this same time prompted us to meet with Lockheed Martin to better understand their media strategy. Embassy and Lockheed Martin efforts to counter disinformation reaped some apparent success (ref B). In the fall of 08, we invited a number of USG officials to visit Oslo to make the public case on why the F-35 is an excellent choice, and the delivery of Norway's first C-130J transport aircraft in November 2008, which followed intense USAF efforts to rush this vital capability. On November 20, the GON announced the decision to buy the F-35s, using unusually strong language (for domestic political reasons) to say the

[¶3.](#) (C) Following the announcement, the Ambassador met with Deputy Defense Minister Espen Barth-Eide. In a very relaxed meeting, Barth-Eide thanked the USG for their support.

[¶4.](#) (C) Looking ahead, Barth-Eide said we were now on the same side and it would be very helpful if the USG were to: --publicly stress the strengths of the F-35 and the USG's role in the program.

[¶5.](#) (C) Barth-Eide stressed that Norway's role as the second to buy into the program (following the US) was an important bellwether and would help to secure the best deal for Norway.

The Lessons Learned

[¶6.](#) (C) While many of the issues in this effort were unique to Norway, some lessons learned may be applicable elsewhere. The main ones include:
--Get the whole country team involved. The active involvement of the Ambassador and DCM, ODC, DAO, Pol/Econ, FCS, and Public Affairs offices ensured a coordinated effort.
--Working with Lockheed Martin to determine which aspects of the purchase to highlight. In Norway the capabilities of the JSF vs. the Gripen were similar, so it was important to highlight the unique features of the JSF.
--Jointly develop a press strategy with Lockheed Martin and collectively determine the role the Embassy will play in this strategy.
--Use the Ambassador to give numerous on-the-record interviews but also to have off-the-record in-depth discussions with editorial boards on the strengths of the F-35.
--Be constantly available to the media to discuss the technical merits of the aircraft, and be assertive in refuting disinformation. In Norway, the media was skeptical of the F-35 and the Ambassador had to work hard to dispel these misconceptions.
--Create opportunities to talk about the aircraft. The Ambassador hosted a luncheon for retired senior military and think-tankers during which they discussed the strengths of the F-35.
--Talk about the impact on the relationship carefully. Deciding our line on this was critical, given Norwegian sensitivities. We needed to avoid being seen as anti-US or anti-NATO.
--Reach out to other USG agencies and experts to encourage their participation in the process and leverage their tools to support the effort. I